



Supporting Community Relationships, Valued Roles & Belonging

Family Session

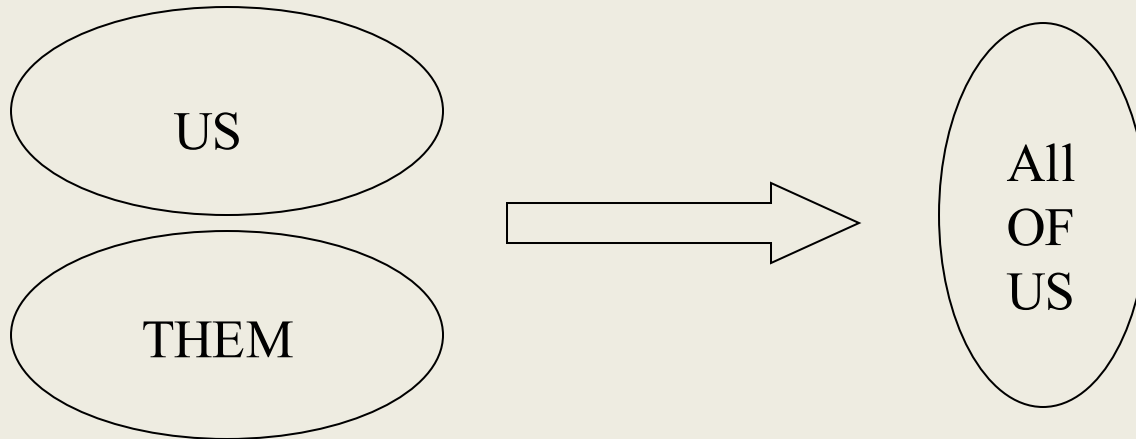
Presented by:
Angela Novak Amado, Ph.D.
May 5, 2021

Integration

People with disabilities have active opportunities to spend most of each day and most of their lives in good relationships with ordinary people in common community settings

AND

People without disabilities have active opportunities to spend most of each day and some of their lives in good relationships with people who have disabilities in common community settings.

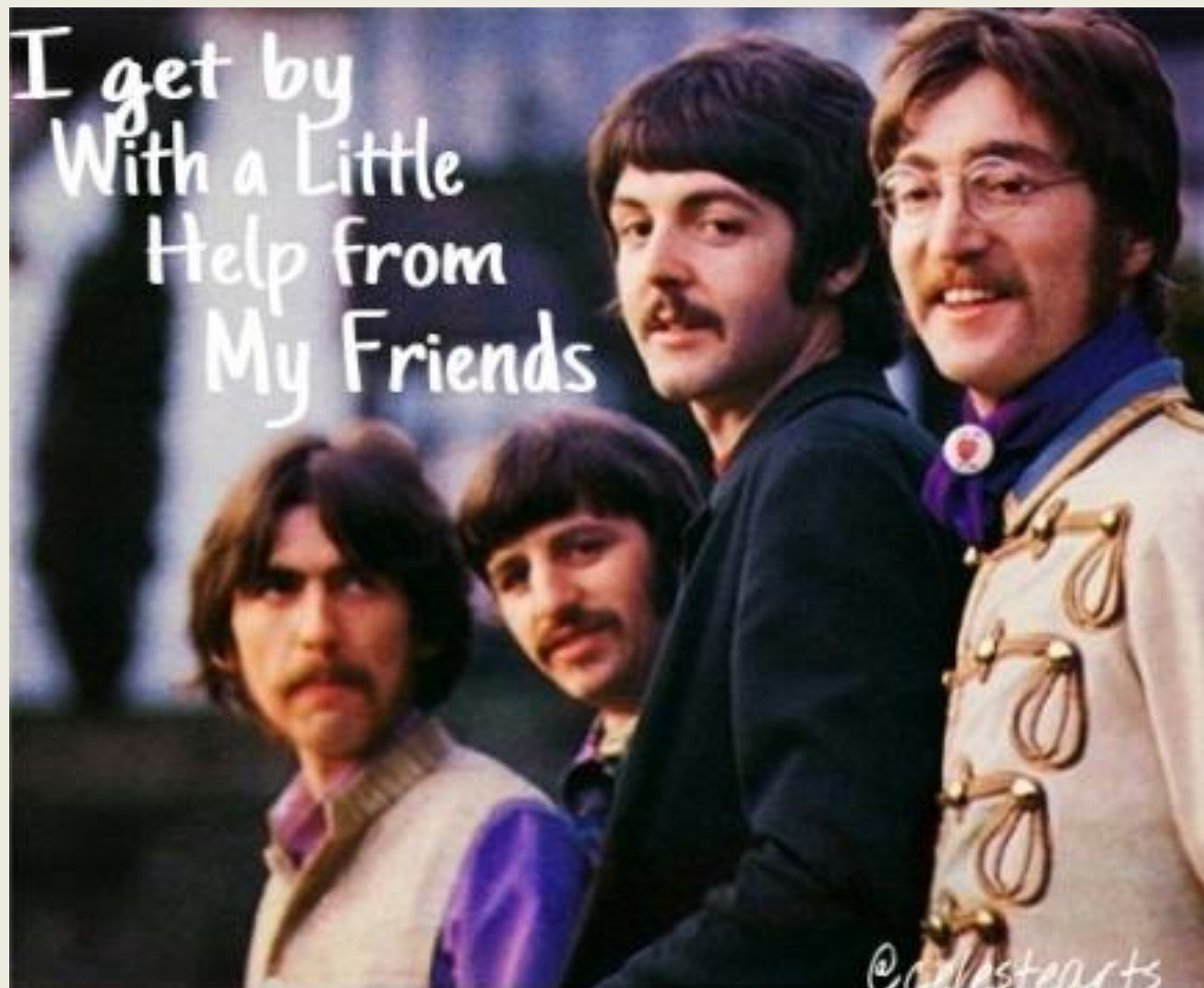


“We need others. We need others to love and we need to be loved by them. There is no doubt that without it, we too, like the infant left alone, would cease to grow, cease to develop, ...”

- Leo Buscaglia

“People who need people ... are the luckiest people in the world.”

- Styne & Merrill “Funny Girl”



REASONS TO WORK ON RELATIONSHIPS

1. Relationships are important to all of us
2. Health and well-being
3. When relationships are supported, people change
4. Provide others the opportunity to be contributed to

REASONS TO WORK ON RELATIONSHIPS

1. Relationships are important to all of us

From NEWSWEEK

“Counting Your Blessings” — why are people happy?

“What comes up consistently at the top of the charts is not, as many might expect, success, youth, good looks or any of those enviable assets. The clear winner is relationships. Close ones.

Followed by a happy marriage... “Supportive, intimate connections with other people seem tremendously important,” says psychologist David Myers, whose book *The Pursuit of Happiness* is one of a cluster of recent books in the field.”

Blue Zones of Happiness

Top elements of happiest people

1. Socializing 5-6 hours a day
2. At least 3 close friends ..
3. Volunteering – being generous

- Dan Buettner

REASONS TO WORK ON RELATIONSHIPS

1. Relationships are important to all of us
2. Health and well-being



Friends may make breast cancer more survivable

By Marilyn Elias, USA TODAY

MONTEREY, Calif. — For women diagnosed with moderately serious breast cancer, a large network of supportive friends and relatives cuts the risk of recurrence and death by 60% over seven years, a researcher reports today.

And breast cancer patients who have just a small core of reliable supporters outside the home — two or less — increase their odds of breast cancer coming back and killing them by 60%, says Karen Weihs of George Washington University Medical Center in Washington, D.C. She'll report on her study of 90 stage 2 breast cancer patients at the American Psychosomatic Society meeting here.

About seven years after diagnosis, 20 had recurrences and 15 of the 90 had died.

The size of a woman's circle of friends and extended family affected survival as much as her disease severity when diagnosed, "and that is remarkable," Weihs says.

Within a few months of diagnosis, women in the study were asked to list people outside their home they could call on for help or support if problems came up.

The average number: six. Network size ranged from two to 10, "and the risk of recurrence and death increased as the number (of pals) decreased below the average," says Weihs. On the other hand, survival odds grew along with the number of helpers above six, she adds.

Whether the women actually could count on these people is unknown, "but this feeling of security could be calming" and lower stress hormones, Weihs says.

As stress hormones drop, immune function improves, other breast cancer studies show. Stress hormone surges can impair immune function, and that might make the women more vulnerable to cancer, she says.

Natural killer (NK) cells, immune cells that target tumors, are particularly sensitive to the effects of stress, "and lower NK cells in breast cancer patients predict more rapid disease progression and earlier death," says David Spiegel of Stanford University Medical School.

In Spiegel's past studies, advanced breast cancer patients participating in support groups lived nearly twice as long as equally ill women not in groups.

But the findings are not definitive, adds Ohio State University psychologist Barbara Andersen. Stage 2 breast cancer recurrence often takes longer than seven years, "and these women will have to be followed." Weihs says she is continuing the study.

Support won't substitute for treatment, she adds. All of the women studied had medical care.

From USA today article

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4. Provide others the opportunity to be contributed to

From Community Members who have befriended people

- “She taught me a different kind of love”
- “I look forward to a lifetime of being her friend”
- “I’d miss spending time with Wayne if he didn’t come to visit”

- “He lifts me up and makes my day”
- “It’s people like Steven who make the world a better place”
- “It’s a true blessing to get to know him”
- “It’s life-giving for both of us”

































Supersweet
FEEDS

RESEARCH FAR



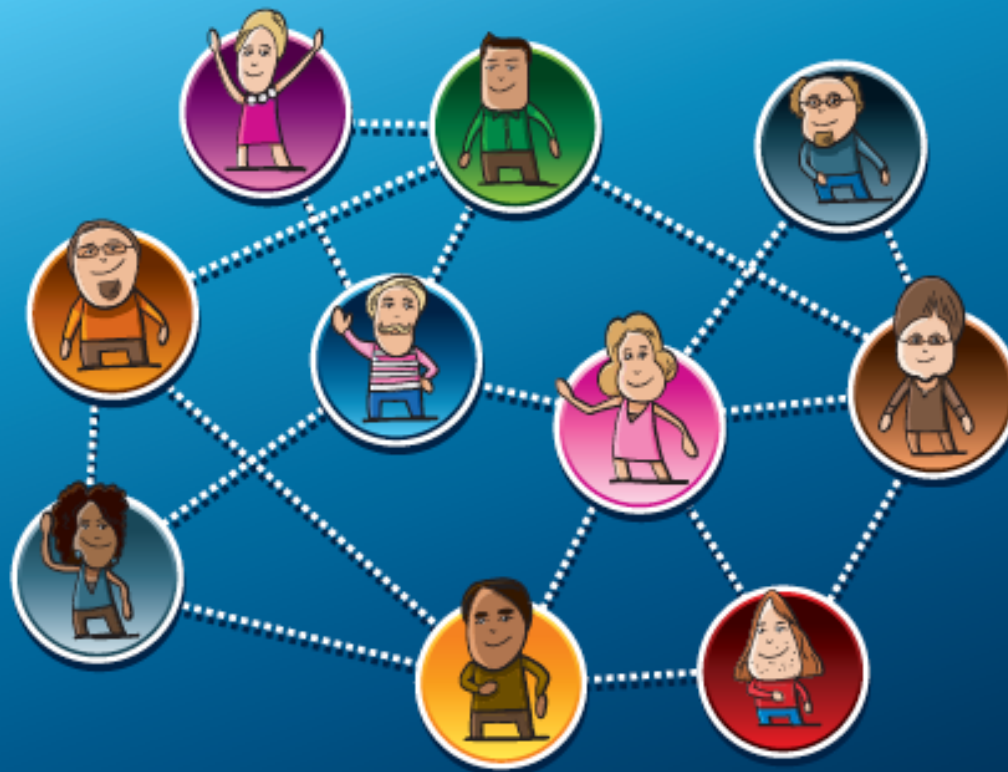












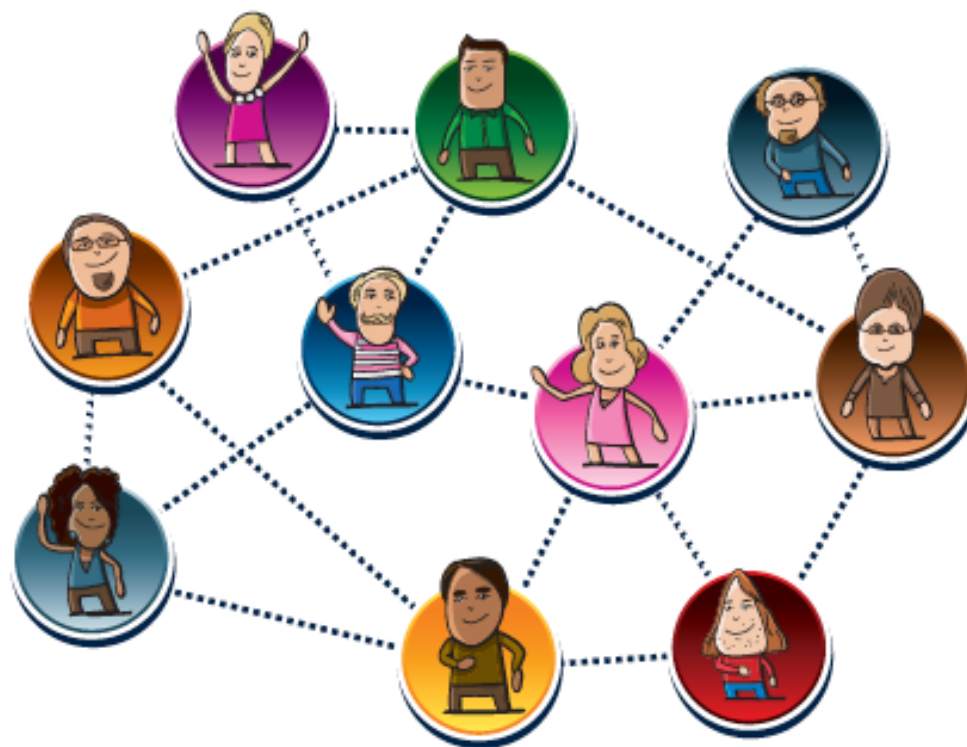
Friends

Connecting people with disabilities
and community members

Angela Novak Amado, Ph.D.

rtc on community living

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Activity worksheets

Friends: Connecting people with disabilities and community members

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Resources

1. Friends manual for staff: www.rtc.umn.edu/friends
2. Family manual: z.umn.edu/friendsfamilymanual

Where did you meet YOUR friends?

Opportunities for Relationships

1. SAME PEOPLE

SAME PLACE

OVER TIME

2. SOME BASIS FOR CONNECTING & EXCHANGE

DO THINGS TOGETHER TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER

OPPORTUNITIES TO:

SHARE INTERESTS

CONTRIBUTE

BE CONTRIBUTED TO



SHIFT OUR THINKING

From ***“Activities”*** to:

***“Who is the person going to get to
know there?”***

When you wanted to
get to know someone better,
what did you do?

Community Members/ Natural Supports =

- School-age: classmates
- Jobs: co-workers
- Others without disabilities
- Members of the wider community

Overall Approach

- Interests & gifts
- Seven strategies
- Introducing/inviting/requesting
- On-going support

Interests ...

- express the meaning in a person's life
- identify: where are others who share these interests
- identify memberships and associations
- may not be easy to define- are discovered and developed in action, trying things out
- express the person's life "calling"

GIFTS . . .

1. What does the person do well?
What are their talents and abilities?
 2. What do others receive from knowing
this person?
- Identifying gifts that can be contributed to
others- leads to community connections

PARENTS' DISCOVERIES DURING TRAINING

- “I never thought my daughter could have friends besides her family and other people with disabilities.” This “changed my way of looking – was eye-opening.”
- “I never thought my child had something to offer others – that he had gifts.”

THREE BROAD CONTEXTS

1. Deepening already existing connections
2. Finding new people
3. Increasing membership/belonging

FIVE STRATEGIES FOR CONNECTING

OVERALL QUESTION:

Who are the People?

Where are the Opportunities for Relationships?

Who will they get to know there?

A. CONNECTING BASED ON INTERESTS AND GIFTS

1. Where are people who would appreciate receiving this person's gifts?
2. Where are all the community places where people engage in one of this person's interests? Who are the people who share this interest?

FIVE STRATEGIES FOR CONNECTING

B. CONNECTING WITH INDIVIDUAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

3. Who are the people who are already acquaintances, who could be asked to get to know the person better?
4. Who might be/where could we find an interested person who could be asked to get to know the person better?

C. COMMUNITY MEMBERSHIP

5. Where are the associations, clubs, and groups?
 - formal
 - informal

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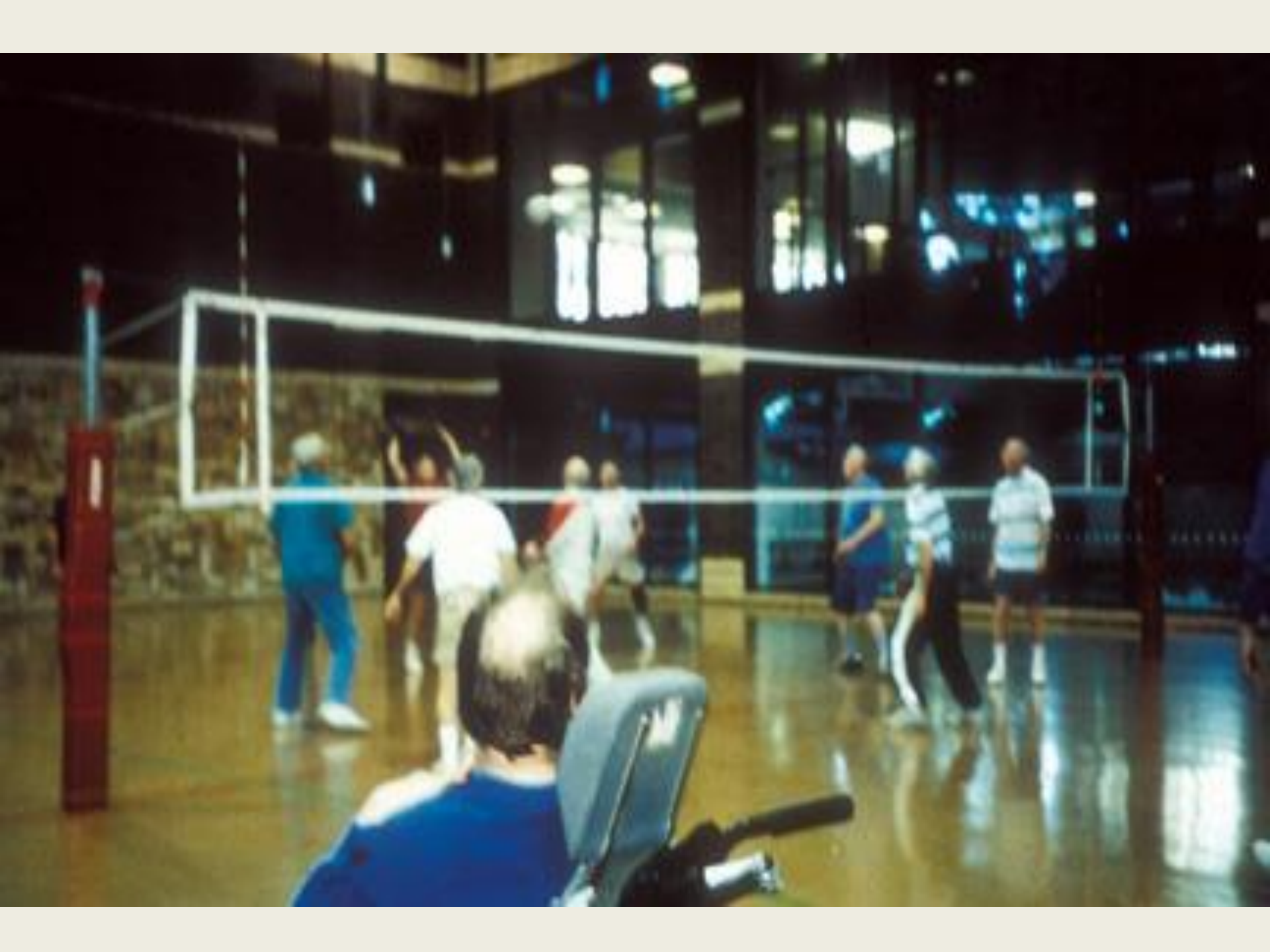












NO POOL IN BUDWIG
IN EASTPETER AREA



NO 1

FAN

LARRY



*A warm story of caring and friendship.
Hamming it up at Edinborough are, from
left, Kim Nelson, senior athletes Paul
Otness, Fran McCallahan and Bob Tischler.
In front, sports fan Larry.*

Senior Citizens And A Guy Named Larry

Walk through Edinborough Park some morning and you might see a bunch of senior jocks playing volleyball with the kind of enthusiasm and vigor you won't often see even in the summertime sand pits at Lake Calhoun. That would be the Edina/Richfield Senior Men's Volleyball Team.

You might also see, on the sidelines, an avid observer whose vicarious participation in the action is so genuinely intense that at times you think he'll launch himself right out of his wheelchair and onto the court. That would be Larry.

Just how did Larry wind up on the sidelines of these volleyball games? A happy coincidence experienced by his friend, Kim Nelson. She happened to be taking a walk at Edinborough Park one day when she was struck by the rhythmic echo of a rubber ball being batted, as it turned out, back and forth across a volleyball net.

Kim knew how much Larry enjoyed the sound of a bouncing ball. In her experience, it was the one thing that really seemed to resonate for him. One Thursday morning she took Larry to watch the senior guys play. If he would rather have been watching the olympic team, that fact would not have been detectable in his beaming demeanor along the sidelines at Edinborough Park. For Kim, it was not only flattering but also deeply touching. Soon the Thursday ritual wasn't the same without Larry; whenever he couldn't make a game, the team felt his absence. As one player put it, "He cheers for everybody, not just for who's winning. If you're having a lousy day on the court, he still makes you feel good, because he just loves to watch us play."



When the volleyball season ended, the senior men invited Larry to attend their softball games, and the relationship continued to grow. Larry showed as much enthusiasm for softball as for volleyball; enjoying the friendly bickering and cheering both sides on. Over the past three years, the guys have given Larry several tokens of appreciation for being their #1 sports fan and Larry has a special place in his room where he displays them along with his 'team' photographs.

At Edinborough Park, on Thursday mornings, you might hear the sound of a bouncing volleyball. And you might hear some excited laughter. And you might think, so what?

You might want to think again.

Kim Nelson is a service facilitator for Dakota, Inc., a private, nonprofit organization that serves adults with developmental disabilities who live in or near the Twin Cities metro area. Dakota, Inc. was founded in 1965 by parents of and advocates for the disabled.

The Edina/Richfield Senior Men's Volleyball group meets Wednesday and Thursday mornings at Edinborough Park, from 9:15 to 10:30 a.m. The season lasts through March, 1995. Any senior interested in playing volleyball and meeting Larry can stop by; ask for Paul Otness. Or call the Edina Senior Center at 920-1115.

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Strategy 2: Where Are All the Places An Interest Can Be Expressed? Who Are the People who Share This Interest?

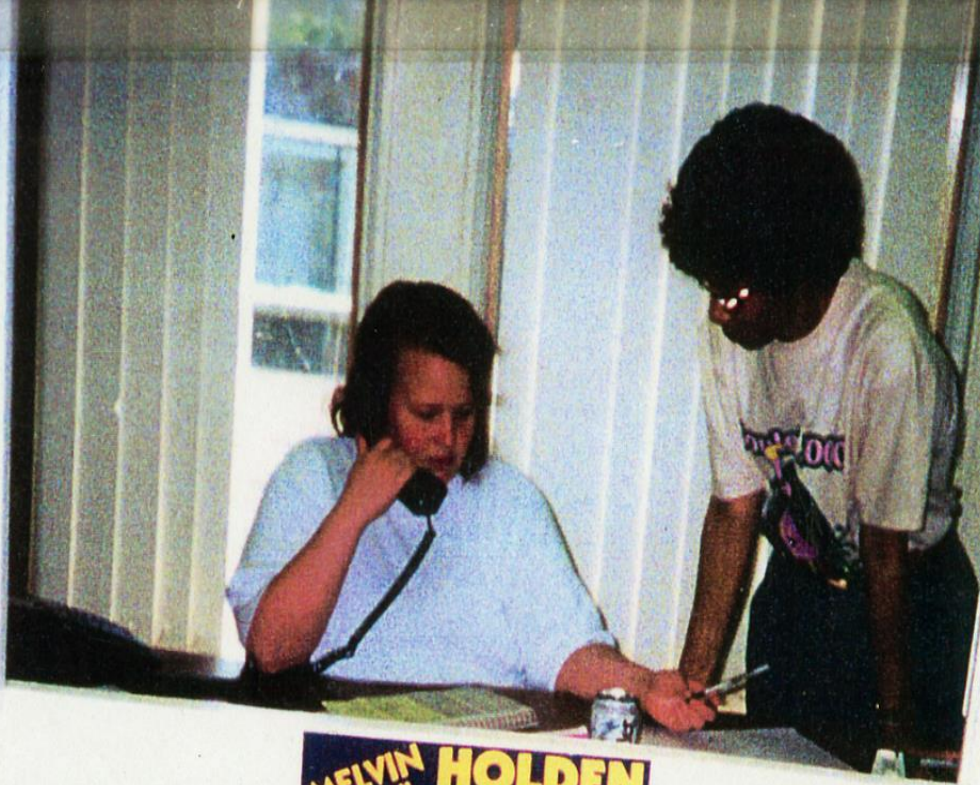
Example with Cars:

- Auto repair body shops
- Auto parts dealers
- Service departments
- Auto inspection
- Auto rentals
- Performance racing
- Mechanics
- Parking lots-garages
- Auto magazines
- Used Cars
- Car washes
- Auto stereos
- Race tracks
- Gas Stations
- Tires





**HOLDEN
MAYOR**



**MELVIN
"KIP"
HOLDEN
MAYOR**

**MELVIN
"KIP"
HOLDEN
MAYOR**



**MELVIN
"KIP"**



Representative (D)
Kip Holden



VALUED SOCIAL ROLES

- Volunteering at Science Museum
- Volunteering at Children's Museum
- Volunteering at a community theater
- Job at pet food supply
- Helping wash the communion cups

- In a theater production
- Weather-watcher
- Job at Chuck and Don's pet shop

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Family

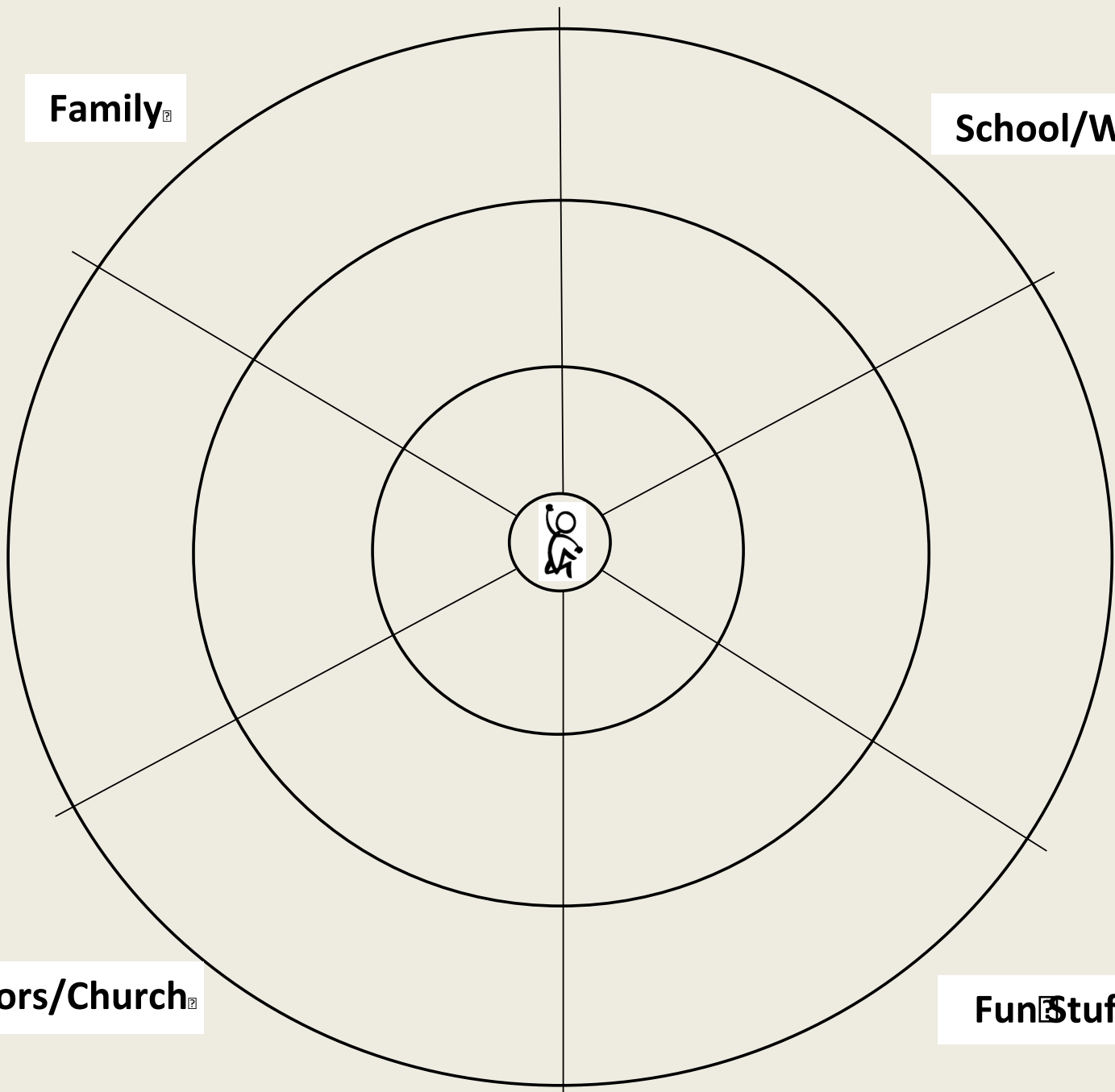
School/Work

**Paid
Supports**

**Fun
Stuff/Groups**

Neighbors/Church

Friends



STRATEGY 3

Community places or people	What community members are there? Who could be asked to get to know the person better?	What could you ask them to do? (coffee, lunch, visit, etc.)
1. _____ _____	1. _____	1. _____
2. _____ _____	2. _____	2. _____
3. _____ _____	3. _____	3. _____
4. _____ _____	4. _____	4. _____
5. _____ _____	5. _____	5. _____
6. _____ _____	6. _____	6. _____

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Strategy 4: Finding an Interested Person

Where could we find others who might befriend/support this person?

1. Who do people know who likes or would like this person?
2. Social ministry programs (e.g., Befrienders, etc.)
3. Formal volunteer programs, such as “Best Buddies” (i.e. college, corporate, high school)
4. Presentations – service learning, faith communities, etc.
5. Former staff
6. Former friends
7. Other family members or family of staff or others
8. Other places, other people?

INDIVIDUAL RELATIONSHIPS

- A friend from church – ask him to have lunch
“I want to meet that guy”
(introduced himself to 3 people --
had never done before)
- Couple giving person a ride to their
and her church twice a month
- Counselor from camp -- “I fell in love with
your son” -- asked if he could be PCA

- Connected with a former staff, who had the daughter stay overnight (about once a month)
- Helped family friend over the summer in his woodshop

- Connecting with old high school friend
- Over holiday: mom asked her sister and her family (husband and 2 nephews) to take daughter out for holiday – they had never done that before
- Former teacher picked her up for craft activities at teacher's home (couple of times a month)













Building Social Relationships at **Work/DayTime**

Two Themes:

1. Work- support coworkers
2. Day time- find community places to meet people/be connected

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An Associational Map

Prepared by John McKnight
Northwestern University
Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research
2040 Sheridan Road
Evanston, Illinois 60208

Artistic Organizations: choral, theatrical, writing

Business Organizations: Chamber of Commerce,
neighborhood business associations, trade
groups

Charitable Groups & Drives: Red Cross, Cancer
Society, United Way

Church Groups: service, prayer, maintenance,
stewardship, acolytes, men's, women's, youth,
seniors

Civic Events: July 4th, art fair, Halloween

Collectors Groups: stamp collectors, flower dryers,
antiques

Community Support Group: "friends" of the library,
nursing home, hospital

Elderly Groups: Senior Citizens

Ethnic Associations: Sons of Norway, Black Heritage
Club, Hibemians

Health and Fitness Groups: Bicycling, jogging, exercise

Interest Clubs: poodle owners, antique car owners

Local Government: town, township, electoral units,
fire department, emergency units

Local Media: radio, newspaper, local access cable TV

Men's Group: cultural, political, social, educational,
vocational

Mutual Support (Self-Help) Groups: Alcoholics
Anonymous, Epilepsy Self-Help, La Leche League

Neighborhood and Block Clubs: crime watch,
beautification, Christmas decorations

Outdoor Groups: garden clubs, Audubon Society,
conservations clubs

Political Organizations: Democrats, Republicans,
caucuses

School Groups: printing club, PTA, child care

Service Clubs: Zonta, Kiwanis, Rotary, American
Association of University Women

Social Cause Groups: peace, rights, advocacy, service

Sports Leagues: bowling, swimming, baseball, fishing,
volleyball

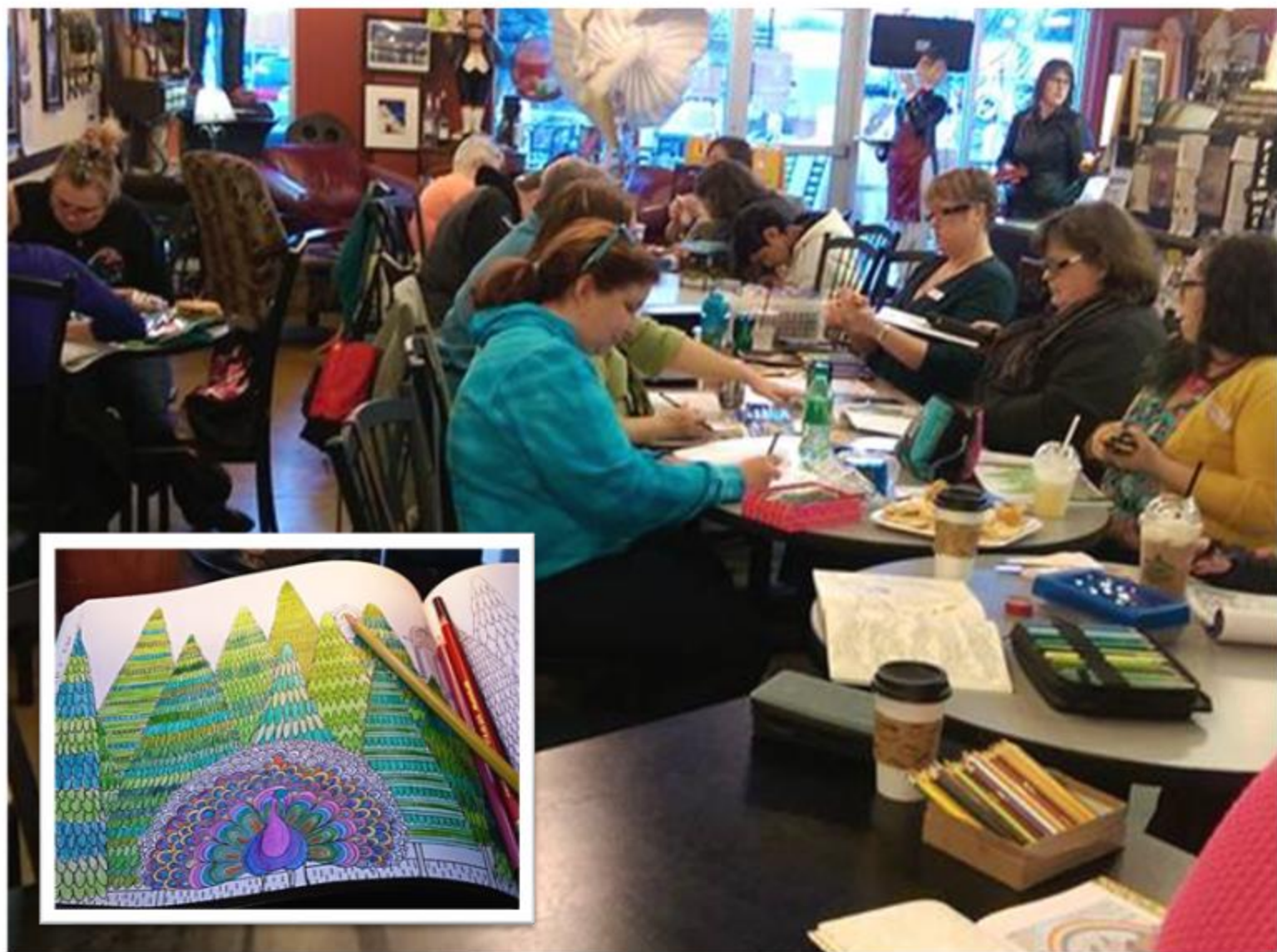
Study Groups: literary clubs, bible study groups

Veterans Groups: American Legion, Amvets, Veterans
of Foreign Wars & Auxiliaries

Women's Groups: cultural, political, social,
educational, vocational

Youth Groups: 4H, Future Farmers, Scouts, YMCA

- www.meetup.com







GROUPS/CLUBS

- A cribbage group that meets every Monday night
- A church and church service the person really liked, with lots of music (a young man who didn't like to be around crowds/people)
- Ladies coloring book group (once a month)
- Mom started a Youth church Friendship Club group ("This is so needed in our church")

- Soul line dancing
- Weekly trivia group (he got the final winning question about a boy band)
- Community chamber orchestra
- Altar Guild monthly meeting

- Japanese Cultural Center
and Geek Cultural Society
- Anime Convention
- Women's hockey & Women's
basketball clubs -- "Fast Break" club
and "Dunkers"

Friendship Club

at Holy Family























APPROACH 5

Associations, Clubs, & Groups (formal and informal)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

- Where are the Places?
- Who do we know there?

Partnering with Schools

“Friendship and relationships are preconditions for learning in schools.”

- Marsha Forrest

“One reason many students have behavioral challenges is because the school is not satisfying basic needs to belong and love, to gain power, to be free, and to have fun.”

- William Glasser

Partnership with Schools

Facilitation is often necessary

- Opportunities
- Interpretation
- Accommodations

What Schools Can Do

1. Take joint responsibility for ensuring a student has genuine friends
2. Actively involve the family in planning
3. Share information about
 - budding relationships,
 - problem-solve about obstacles, and
 - offer each other ideas

What Schools Can Do

4. Encourage the student's involvement in extra curricular activities
5. Inform parents about community recreation opportunities – what activities are the student's friends involved in?

Working with Agency Staff

- In-home support staff
 - Other residential staff
 - Day program/employment staff
-
- Is it in the annual plan?
 - Setting objectives & expectations

YOUR BEST IDEAS FOR CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS:

Criteria for selecting “best” ideas:

1. The best opportunity to get to know community members personally
2. The person agrees/likes/is willing to try
3. Do-able
4. Ease of welcome

We Found ...

Social inclusion takes

going beyond

“Asking”

- “I ASKED !!... I went out of my comfort zone ...”

(mother made list of people to email, asked someone from church, asked someone who daughter went to grade school with)

- Concerns about HOW to ask (not “poor disabled person” or “charity”)

Parents discovering

- “I have friends who say ‘Nice to meet you, nice to have a new friend – when are you guys coming again?’”
- The other dads that one dad asked were “humbled and honored” that he asked them to be supportive of his son
- “I would love to spend time with her”
- “It would never have come about without asking”

What ideas do you
want to pursue?

Structure Helps

Some parents made a commitment to get something done before the next meeting:

- “With the looming deadline of this meeting ...”
- “I got (X) done because I was coming to this meeting ... this group does that.”
- “(I had these ideas before but) I wouldn’t do it without these meetings.”

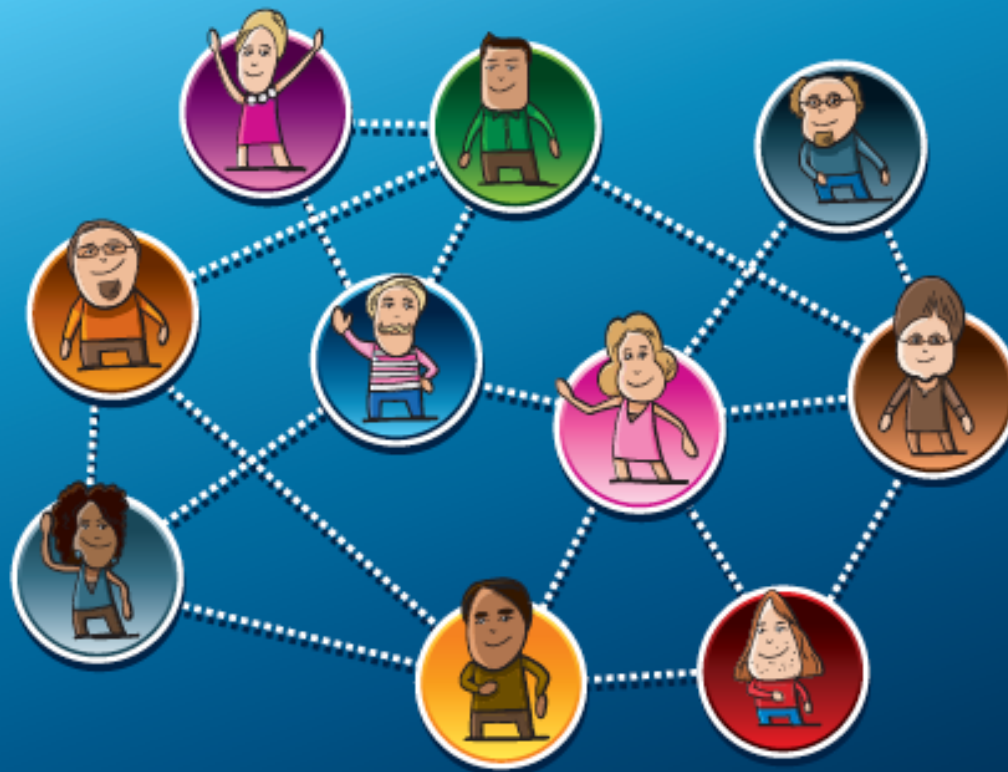
Tips for Success

“To-Do”s

1. See the person as their Interests and Gifts
2. Explore opportunities for relationships- who can the person get to know there? Who are the people?
3. One-to-one introductions
4. One person, one environment
5. Being an “asker/inviter”- “It never hurts to ask”

Three Necessary Beliefs for Success

1. Your valuing and personal appreciation of the individual with disabilities
2. Your faith in finding interested community members
3. Your belief in the importance of community building for everyone



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Resources

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2. Family manual: z.umn.edu/friendsfamilymanual
3. Friendship and Community Connections Between People with and without Developmental Disabilities, by Angela Novak Amado www.amazon.com/used books

CONTACTS

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Life is nothing
without friendship

-Cicero